

# Bromus arenarius

## COMMON NAMES

sand brome

## BIOSTATUS

Native

## CURRENT CONSERVATION STATUS

2023 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: Sp, DPR, DPS, DPT, EF, PF, TO

[Jump to previous conservation statuses](#)

## CATEGORY

Vascular

## STRUCTURAL CLASS

Grasses

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Yellow-green annual 200–860 mm tall, tufted or solitary, basal leaves withering at or before flowering. **Leaf-sheath** densely villous. **Ligule** 1–2.6 mm, lacerate. **Leaf-blade** 70–300 × 1.7–5 mm, densely villous. **Culm** 150–600(–800) mm, erect or geniculate-ascending, internodes pubescent below panicle. **Panicle** 70–260 mm, lax, nodding; branches filiform, curving. **Spikelets** 30–40 mm, 5–8-flowered, numerous, loosely hairy, oblong-lanceolate to wedge-shaped. **Glumes** unequal, acute, acuminate, apert, covered within long fine hairs; lower 7–9.5 mm, 3-nerved, narrow oblong-lanceolate, upper 9.5–13 mm, 5–7-nerved, narrow elliptic-lanceolate. **Lemna** 11–14 mm, 7–9-nerved, rounded, papery, oblong- to narrowly elliptic-lanceolate, covered with long fine hairs, apex sometimes entire or with 2-acute lobes, awn 14–20 mm, arising 2 mm below lemma apex. **Palea**  $\frac{3}{4}$  length of lemma, keels sparsely long-ciliate, interkeel glabrous. **Callus** with minute hairs. **Rachilla** 1.2 mm, pubescent. **Anthers** 0.8–1.5 mm.

## SIMILAR TAXA

A distinctive late winter to spring time annual, which has usually dried off by December. It can be distinguished from all other bromes naturalised in New Zealand by the 3-nerved lower glume, and 5–7-nerved upper glume, loosely hairy spikelets, and by the glabrous interkeels of the palea.

## DISTRIBUTION

Indigenous. In New Zealand known from mainly coastal locations from the Three Kings Islands south to Mahia Peninsula, thence disjunct to Wellington Harbour, and the Chatham Islands. It has been found once in the South Island, inland at Molesworth in Marlborough. Also on Norfolk Island and along the eastern side of Australia.

## HABITAT

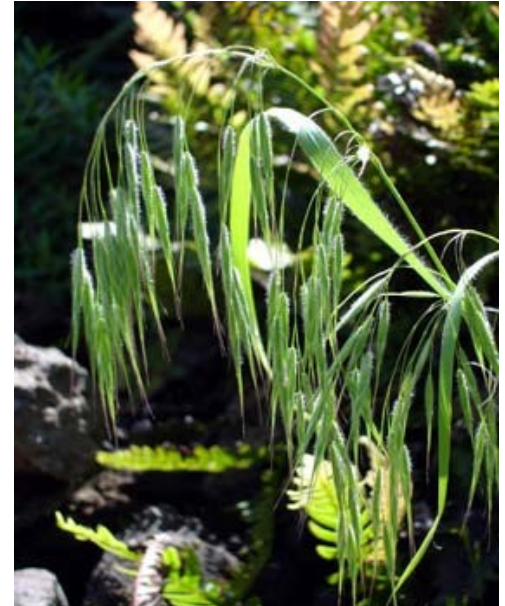
Coastal to lowland (with one montane record from Marlborough). A species of open rocky ground. coastal cliff faces, scree and boulderfield. Often associated with sea bird nesting grounds, especially gulls.

## THREATS

Although not really threatened this species is never particularly common anywhere. It has a naturally sporadic distribution.

## GENUS

Bromus



*Bromus arenarius* inflorescence prior to anthesis, Ex Cult. October 2005. Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Licence: CC BY-NC.



*Bromus arenarius* inflorescence after anthesis, ex. cult. Photographer: Peter J de Lange, Date taken: 01/11/2005, Licence: CC BY-NC.

## FAMILY

Poaceae

## AUTHORITY

*Bromus arenarius* Labill.

## SYNONYMS

None in New Zealand

## TAXONOMIC NOTES

Although Edgar & Connor (2000, Flora of New Zealand Vol. V) regard this species as an early European introduction, the reason for this decision was not given (though one assumes this is because early collections were made from the vicinity of ports), but as its seeds are bird dispersed, and its ecology and distribution shows strong links to sea bird nesting grounds, it is just as likely that it is indigenous here. Prior to the publication of Flora V, *B. arenarius* had always been regarded as indigenous. Despite the decision made by Edgar & Connor (2000) NZPCN see no reason to regard this species as any thing other than indigenous.

## ENDEMIC TAXON

No

## ENDEMIC GENUS

No

## ENDEMIC FAMILY

No

## FLOWERING

(July-)August-October

## FRUITING

August-December

## PROPAGATION TECHNIQUE

An annual. Easily grown from fresh seed. Rather attractive when flowering.

## ETYMOLOGY

**bromus:** From the ancient Greek word bromos, referring to a kind of oat

**arenarius:** Sand dweller

## MANAAKI WHENUA ONLINE INTERACTIVE KEY

[Key to the grasses of New Zealand](#)

## NVS CODE

BROARE

## CHROMOSOME NUMBER

2n = 28

## PREVIOUS CONSERVATION STATUSES

2017 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: EF, Sp, TO

2012 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: EF, SO, Sp

2009 | At Risk – Naturally Uncommon | Qualifiers: EF, SO

2004 | Sparse

[Jump to current conservation status](#)

## REGIONAL CONSERVATION STATUSES

Auckland: 2025 | Regionally Threatened – Regionally Endangered | Qualifiers: DPR, DPS, DPT, EF, NStr, PF, RR, TO  
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The regional threat classification system leverages off the national assessments in the NZTCS, providing information relevant for the regional context. Auckland conservation status information is sourced from the [“Conservation status of vascular plant species in Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland”](#) Simpkins E et al. (2025) report.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Edgar E, Connor HE. 2000. Flora of New Zealand. Vol. V. Grasses. Christchurch, Manaaki Whenua Press. 650 p.

## ATTRIBUTION

Description modified from Edgar and Connor (2000)

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## MORE INFORMATION

<https://www.nzpcn.org.nz/flora/species/bromus-arenarius/>

## PDF DATE

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